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FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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OCTOBER 21, 1923

Uncle Jimmy's Ammunition

BY MARGUERITE GEIBEL

DAVE, I wish you'd take this plate down to Mrs. Stokes. I got it by mistake, after the last church supper, and I called her up and told her I'd send it to her." Mrs. Willard went on with her sewing, as if she hadn't just exploded a bomb.

Dave squirmed, and his Uncle Jimmy,

who was watching him, grinned. It wasn't that Dave minded going errands, for he was always glad of a fresh reason for being outdoors, but Mrs. Stokes would ask him in, and if the truth must be known, Dave was shy.

When Mrs. Willard was called to the door, Uncle Jimmy was still grinning. "Don't you want to call on Mrs. Stokes, Dave?" his uncle inquired.

"Don't want to call on anyone. I don't mind taking the plate, if I could leave it on the step and run," Dave said seriously.

"Kind of shy of these strange grown-ups, eh?" Uncle Jimmy wanted to know.

"I never know what to say to them" his nephew admitted.

"I'd tell you something, if I thought you wouldn't get angry" Uncle Jimmy pursued, "something you'd be glad to know, too."

"Why don't you tell me? Why should I be angry about it?" Dave was curious to know.

Uncle Jimmy wasn't very old—just out of college, in fact, and he liked Dave. He really wanted to help him out of this difficulty, if only Dave would take the advice as his uncle meant it.

"Well, I'm warning you, Dave, old boy. You won't like the idea until you get used to it; and I suppose you'll get used to it just as soon as you find it works." He saw that Dave was curious, so decided to risk it.

"Shyness is another name for laziness" Uncle Jimmy said calmly.

Dave was so surprised he didn't say a word, for a long minute. Then, finally, "I don't see what laziness has to do with it."

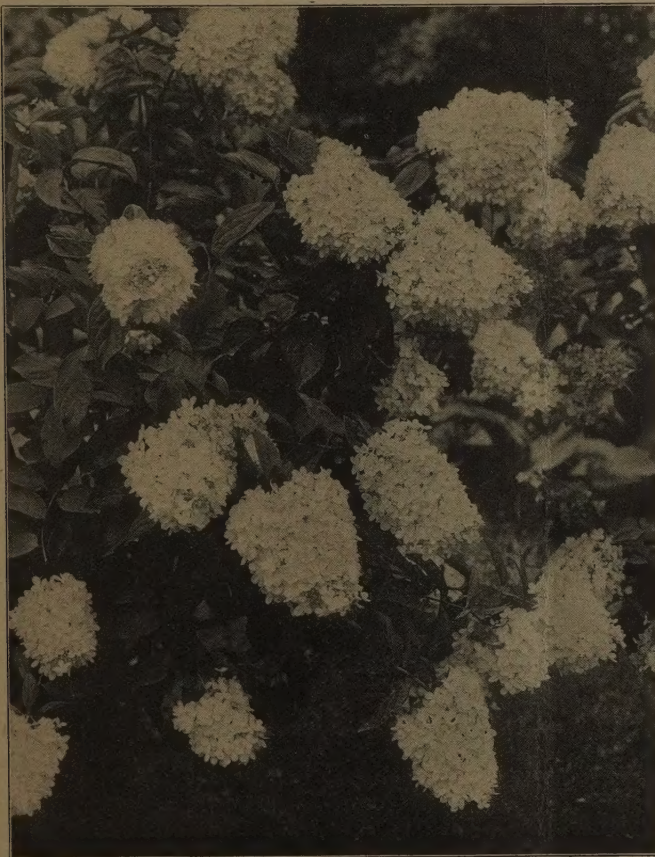
"Own up, son, don't you squirm when you talk to grown folks when your hands are dirty because you've been playing ball, and your shoes haven't been blacked in a week, and you forgot to brush your clothes?"

Dave pondered this a moment. "Well, I suppose it makes some difference" he admitted finally.

"Isn't it easier to talk to people when you aren't wondering whether they notice your hands and clothes?"

"Yes, I never thought of it before." Uncle Jimmy was relieved to see that Dave was too interested to be angry. As a matter of fact Dave really wanted to hear about anything that would help him overcome his shyness.

"That's half of it, Dave. Now for the other half, which is just as much laziness as the first—and even more important a thing to know," his uncle said mysteriously: "It is to be prepared to talk to people. You'll notice I'm a great believer in preparedness—the peaceful kind." Uncle Jimmy laughed. "A farmer is greatly embarrassed when it rains—unless his ripe crops are in out of danger—and he's prepared for rain. You would not feel nearly as much afraid of a man



HARDY HYDRANGEAS

Beauty

IN the hush of dawning day,
 In the stillness of the night,
 In the broad white milky way,
 Shines God's beauty, calm and bright.

In the petals of the rose,
 In the wings of butterflies,
 In the softly falling snows,
 In the amber-tinted skies,

In the mountains high and steep,
 In the wild winds soft and low,
 In the valleys dark and deep,
 In the sunset's fading glow,

In the crimson clover fields,
 In the earth and moon and sea;
 Everything that nature yields—
 Speaks of beauty rare to me.

A. L. W. in *The Girls' Circle*.

who held you up with a gun, if you had a gun of your own."

"People are just the same. You needn't be embarrassed about meeting them, if you have a stock of conversation laid in for an emergency." Uncle Jimmy was quite serious, but it was such a brand new idea that Dave thought for a time that he must be joking. However, it sounded reasonable.

"Of course, it doesn't always work, but when you *know* you're going to meet someone, choose a subject you know will be interesting,—preferably one you like yourself,—and you will be surprised how much five minutes preparation will do." "How about dogs? Has Mrs. Stokes a dog?"

"Yes—an Airedale" Dave replied promptly. He knew just about every dog for miles around.

"Good!" Uncle Jimmy said enthusiastically. "Then get ready to talk dogs. You can get a line of questions and remarks ready while you're on your way."

Mrs. Willard stepped into the room just then. "Why Dave, I thought you'd be gone. Better start now, son, so you'll be back for dinner."

"I was getting ready" Dave answered, and looked at Uncle Jimmy. They both grinned. Dave started off, thinking so hard about the latter part of his uncle's advice that he had forgotten the first. He had reached the front walk, when he remembered it and, turning back, he slipped in the back door—wiped off his shoes carefully, brushed his clothes, washed his hands, and smoothed his hair—all so quietly that his mother and uncle didn't hear him.

On his way, he thought dogs and nothing but dogs—but Airedales in particular—tricks and brave things they had done; faithful dogs, clever ones, and watchdogs. It was only a ten minute walk, but Dave hoped fervently that, after all the conversational material he had prepared, Mrs. Stokes wouldn't keep the subject turned to something else, where he could only say "Yes, ma'am" and "No, ma'am."

He rang the bell, whistling to keep from thinking too much.

"Why, hello, Dave. It was good of you to come all the way down with that plate. I haven't anyone to send." Mrs. Stokes paused and looked off into the distance. Her own two boys had died.

"I suppose 'Rags' isn't very good at carrying plates," Dave suggested, and was surprised to hear himself say it. Rags wagged when he heard his name, for his owner evidently approved of this caller.

Mrs. Stokes laughed. "No, but he can do pretty nearly everything else. He can tell our car away off, and he watches it when we go anywhere and leave it." Like all dog owners, Mrs. Stokes enjoyed talking about the clever things her dog could do.

"Albert Reetz, a fellow I know, has an Airedale that woke up the family one night, barking, and they found a fire had started. It hadn't made much headway, but it would have if the dog hadn't warned them."

"Is that so? Where do they live?" Mrs. Stokes was all interest, because it was an Airedale, and she counted on telling Mr. Stokes about it when he came home. She wanted to know all the details.

They talked a few minutes and then Dave said he must go.

"Thanks for bringing the plate, Dave."

"That's all right, Mrs. Stokes. I wanted to see Rags anyway." Rags acknowledged the compliment by barking and wagging his tail vigorously.

Mrs. Stokes said goodbye, and invited Dave to come to see Rags any time. She appeared greatly pleased that someone appreciated her dog.

Dave walked home very quickly—ran most of the way. It felt good to know that he had talked to someone without mumbling and twisting his cap. He began to see more clearly what his uncle meant by saying shyness was laziness. You could nearly always think of something to say if you really wanted to, and a good many times you could think it up in advance. After a fellow had a little practice, it would be easier, too.

Not such a bad idea, either, about looking presentable, he thought, as long as you know you're going to talk to someone. Uncle Jimmy's scheme was all right all through. It might not *always* work, but would always *help* a lot—and Uncle Jimmy hadn't gone through college for nothing.

When Dave reached home, his father was there, so Uncle Jimmy didn't get a chance to inquire about how his system worked.

But Dave and Uncle Jimmy understood one another fairly well, and had a language of their own. Uncle Jimmy raised one eyebrow. His nephew closed one eye, in response.

What the Good Dragon-Fly Told Me

BY FRANCES MARGARET FOX

ONE day a dragon-fly almost bumped into me and it was his fault too, because I was sitting perfectly still when he came darting round the corner without looking to see where he was going; at least that is how it seemed, although perhaps he was sailing after a fly that had come buzzing round the corner a second before. Anyway, it must have hurt the dragon-fly's feelings to see a grown person jump at the sight of him just as she used to do when she was a little girl and didn't know any better.

Said that dragon-fly to me *as plainly as a dragon-fly ever said anything* to a human being.

"Please tell the boys and girls that we are their good friends so they will not act afraid of us even after they grow up!"

Said I to the dragon-fly, "Sir, I shall gladly do so because it is too bad that such ridiculous stories are told about a handsome, useful creature like yourself. Worse than that, your folks are always being killed when they should be protected. Indeed," I continued, as the dragon-fly lingered near, "every family in the land should really keep dragon-flies for pets, because"—

But the dragon-fly didn't wait to hear more; he darted away so swiftly that we couldn't see where he went, which almost proves that he didn't know how to take a joke.

It is no joke though about how badly dragon-flies have been treated in days gone by. They have been called bad names. The beautiful dragon-fly is often spoken of as the devil's darning needle, and to this day there are many little children who are taught to believe, by those who should know better, that dragon-flies can sew their lips together as if they really had needles and thread and were ever known to do such a cruel thing!

A dragon-fly never harmed a child in this wide world; not even away back in the days of the cave men. Dragon-flies cannot harm human beings because they can neither sting nor bite if they should ever wish to do so.

In the beginning a dragon-fly baby hasn't wings. It lives in the water during that part of its life, when it is known as the larva of the dragon-fly.

The larvae of mosquitoes, which are called wigglers, also live in the same pond or wherever the still water may be. That is, they live in the water until a young dragon-fly larva comes swimming, swimming after a few hundred of him for his dinner.

Next time you see a beautiful dragon-fly darting about on his gauzy wings just remember that when he was a baby he lived on wigglers that didn't have a chance to hatch into mosquitoes just because he had such a good appetite.

Perhaps you know that when the right time comes a dragon-fly larva climbs out of the water by using a reed for a ladder. At the top of the ladder he slides out of his old clothes and there he is, with new wings ready to unfold and spread before he flies away—and probably forgets all about the old swimming days!

Instead of sewing children's mouths tight shut as those who do not know have accused him of doing, a dragon-fly makes it his business the rest of his life to catch house-flies!

So you see, from their cradles to the grave dragon-flies are friends of ours, and for our own sake, if for no other reason, they should never be killed.

The dragon-fly that so nearly bumped into me that day will never know of course that I have kept my word and have told the boys and girls the truth about his manner of life; even so, it is a comfort to have kept a promise even to a dragon-fly!

Daddy's Birthday Present

BY JOSEPHINE E. TOAL

"MOTHER'S coming home today! Mother's coming!" Clinton cried, clapping his buttery little hands as he slipped down from his high chair.

"And it's daddy's birthday," added Bobby, stuffing the last piece of toast into his mouth and pushing back his plate. "Will he have a birthday cake, Hilda?"

"Maybe, if I get time," Hilda replied, brushing up crumbs. "I'll be busy enough this morning, so you and Clinton must play outside and not bother me."

"When will mamma be here?" Clinton asked.

"She will come with your daddy. When he leaves the store for dinner he will go to the train to meet her. Now run away, both of you, and play."

The boys seized their old play hats from the low-down hooks behind the kitchen door and scampered out to the sandpile.

"Daddy's goin' to have a birthday cake!" sang Clinton, as he found a little pail and began to fill his cart with sand.

Bobby stood looking on. "Daddy didn't get any birthday present," he said after a while.

Clinton very slowly poured a paiful of sand into the wagon. Then a smile brightened his round face. "You an' me 'll buy daddy a pretty book, Bobby, an' picksures an' lions an' tigers an' things." He wagged his little head up and down in satisfaction.

"Humph!" returned Bobby, "we haven't got any money."

"Hilda will give us some money," Clinton's sunny smile flashed out again.

But Bobby shook his head. "She said we couldn't have any more till mother comes home."

Clinton was sober for a minute and then went back to his sand-carrying.

Bobby stood thoughtfully digging his foot into the sand. Suddenly his head went up. "Let us earn some money and buy a book, Clint—you and me. Daddy said he picked blackberries in the woods when he was a little boy and sold them. Let's go way down the road and off in the woods where the blackberries are. Come on."

"All right," agreed Clinton, sweetly, dropping the pail.

"Bobby caught it up. 'We've got to have something to pick in,' he said. Clinton was only four and Bobby most six, so of course Bobby could think of things.

Off down the winding country road the little boys started. At first they hurried along in a business-like way, but when they came to the footbridge over the little creek that crossed the road they stopped to watch the fishes.

"I can get a paiful of 'em just as easy," declared Bobby. Lying flat on the plank, he dipped the pail into the water, but

when he tried to pull it up it wasn't so easy after all and some way it slipped from his hands to the bottom of the creek.

"Maybe it will come to the top bimeby," Clinton suggested. They waited around a while, throwing sticks into the place where the pail went down, until Bobby said, "Come on, we'll pick the berries in our hats."

On they trudged again. The day was growing hot, and the little lads were warm and tired and dusty and almost ready to turn back when they saw an automobile coming toward them up the road. Autos didn't often travel the woodsy country where the boys lived and they were excited at seeing this one. As it came nearer they saw a fat man was driving, and the pleasant-faced lady beside him had a little black box in her hand. She was talking earnestly to the man. "We certainly must not miss this snap," she was saying as the car came to a stop.

"Hello, little men," the fat man called out to Bobby and Clinton, "going to town?"



"No sir," answered Bobby, "we're going to pick blackberries."

"Blackberries now?" laughed the man.

"Well, well!" The lady was doing something to the little black box when the man exclaimed: "Wish I had a blackberry pie right now, big as that pond over there!"

"It was the boys' turn to laugh then, and the first thing they knew the lady made something go "click" in the box and said, smiling: "Thank you, dears, that will be a fine picture. But let me tell you it is too early for blackberries, and you might get lost in the woods."

The next minute the car was rolling

on up the road, the lady waving back to the two little boys who, with shining faces and each with a silver dime in his hand, stood watching the auto out of sight.

"Candy!" cried Bobby, facing about in the dusty road; and "Candy!" of course echoed his brother.

On down the road they scampered. Somewhere in the direction of daddy's hardware store was a place to buy candy.

Suddenly Bobby stopped short, and of course his brother stopped, too.

"Clint," Bobby looked soberly at the other little boy, "It isn't candy. We forgot. It's daddy's birthday book."

Clinton looked longingly at his silver piece for a while, then he nodded smiling, "It's for daddy."

Then on they trudged, turning a corner now and then. The sun grew hotter and the way was long. Just when it seemed as if they never would find the place where the stores were, who should come along but John, the creamery man. John stopped his wagon.

"Hello, boys, where you going?"

"We're going to buy daddy a birthday book," Bobbie answered proudly.

"Well, I declare! But you're going in the wrong direction to find a store, kiddies. Jump in and I'll take you there. Going that way myself."

When they reached town John set them down at the book store. "Here's the place to buy your book," he said, "and after that you go right across the street to your dad's store. That's it where the pails are in the window. See?"

It was a very surprised daddy that saw two little boys come rushing into his store waving a gay picture book and tumbling over each other in their eagerness to explain about 'tigers an' giraffes an' monkeys an' things."

But the train was pulling in and he hurried Bobby and Clinton into the buggy at the store door and away they all went to meet mamma.

On the way home the boys told about the fat man and the nice lady, about the little black box and the silver money and everything, and Daddy declared the picture book was the very nicest birthday present he ever had in all his life.

A Cold One

A lad had been building up his own radio set, and had secured a far-reaching scope with it, when he said to his younger brother:

"Well, Jimmie, I got London last night when I opened up my new step."

"Hub", replied his brother, dryly, "that's nothing. When I went to bed last night I just opened my window and got 'Chile'".

A Negro went fishing. He hooked a big catfish which pulled him overboard. As he crawled back into the boat, he said, philosophically: "What I wanna know is dis: Is dis niggah fishin' or is dis fish nigger'n?"—*Atlanta Constitution*.



THE BEACON CLUB

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.



Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

57 BEECH STREET,
KEENE, N. H.

Dear Miss Buck:—A couple of years ago I joined the Beacon Club but I lost my button and I want to get another. You will find a two-cent stamp enclosed.

I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and I like the stories. My father thinks it is lots of fun to work out the puzzles and I may send one in. I have been reading the letters in *The Beacon* and I would like some of the *Beacon* girls to write to me. I am nine years old and in the fifth grade. In Sunday school we are studying about Nature and it is very interesting.

Yours truly,
DOROTHY EDNA FARR.

Being an Explorer at Home

BY J. ELMER RUSSELL

YOUNG people naturally think of explorers as men who go into far distant places of the world, as Columbus journeyed westward on a search for India and stumbled upon America on the way, as Peary after many toilsome attempts finally reached the North Pole.

As a matter of fact, however, one does not need to travel far outside his own dooryard to come into contact with the unknown and therefore to have before him the possibility of being an explorer. If young people live in the country then the farm on which they live is a very continent of opportunity for exploration.

For young people with an exploring type of mind there are all sorts of pleasure ahead in exploring the plants and flowers in the neighborhood. It is safe to say that in the smallest yard there are plants every year to which the boys and girls of the home are entire strangers unless they have begun to explore. Near by are swamps to explore, and country roadsides, and the banks of ponds, and the shores of rivers.

What a day it is when one first finds the chalice of the pitcher plant. It looks innocent enough until one sees that the inner surface of the rim is set with nectar glands, and that below these the wall is made into a regular toboggan slide with a coating of wax. So it comes about that the hapless insects, attracted by the sweet, slide into the fluid in the cup and are drowned and become food for the plant. Still more wonderful to the plant explorer is Venus' Fly-trap, which shuts to its folding bristle-armed blades when an insect lights upon one of them.

Or one may decide to explore the haunts and habits of his bird neigh-

Dear Miss Buck:

I would like very much to join the Beacon Club. I am ten years old and am in the fifth grade at school. I am in the fourth grade at Sunday school. I have two sisters: Katherine is fourteen and Bertha is five. We have a donkey and four cats. I would like to correspond with some girl of my age.

SHERBORN, MASS.

Yours truly,
GERTRUDE PUCY.

9 ALLEN STREET,
LEBANON, N. H.

Dear Miss Buck:—I go to the Unitarian Sunday school and like to go very much. I am eleven years old. I would like to correspond with some girl about ten or eleven in some other state. I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club.

Sincerely yours,
PHOEBE GRAHAM.

bors. What fun there is in hunting out the birds without a gun, and in growing accustomed to their ways. Until the bird explorer has been at work some time he does not realize how many birds there are in his near neighborhood. Then, once in a while, to one who is on the watch there will appear a bird traveler, resting on his long flight for a day or driven out of his usual course by storms.

Butterflies and moths are an unknown world which challenge many another explorer. It is well to go to a library and get a book with colored pictures of the moths and butterflies before starting out to be this sort of explorer. The first year one explores he may make the acquaintance of only a few of these airy creatures, but be it remembered that most explorers have to make a second and a third voyage.

There is something in the distant and the out of reach which appeals to us, but when one finally begins to explore the near at hand and the accessible, he finds himself in touch with undreamed of sources of joy.

Theodore Roosevelt, who in Africa and South America was an explorer of the distant, was ever an explorer also of the strange out-of-doors near at hand. One reason he saw so much of interest when far away was because he had developed sharp eyes for the wonders of the near-at-home.

OCTOBER's bright with colors,
The skies are blue and gold,
The woods are full of crimson,
As ever they can hold.

The fields are brown and yellow,
The frost is silver white;
October's bright with colors,
O such a pretty sight.

Nancy Byrd Turner
in *The Church School*.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA V.

I am composed of 28 letters.
My 7, 8, 11, 4, 6, 17, is a place for a fire.
My 9, 10, 3, 1, is part of a bird's foot.
My 9, 13, 14, 15, 12, is sweet.
My 22, 20, 21, 16, is utter defeat.
My 17, 18, 19, 4, is a measurement of time.
My 1, 2, 5, is tiny.
My whole is found in the book of Isaiah.

J. B. W.

ENIGMA VI.

I am composed of 21 letters.
My 4, 2, 18, 1, 5, is a division of poetry.
My 12, 13, 9, 14, 15, is a good place to play.
My 6, 9, 10, 11, 16, 3, is a male bird.
My 8, 7, 21, 21, is liked by small girls.
My 19, 21, 20, 17, is part of a chimney.
My whole is advice given by an old-time poet.

M. W. S.

MISSING WORDS.

(Supply the missing words by transposing the letters of the first for each of the others, one of the words being used in two places.)

Mary sat with in hand,
Writing dramatic.
Did she the plots she planned?
Negative emphatic.
..... to us the may be,
But at they're new to she.

M. T. F.

THE CLOCK PUZZLE

1. Why is a clock like yarn?
2. Why like a hen?
3. Why like a laborer?
4. Why like a foreman?
5. Why like a bank note?
6. Why like a secretary?
7. What do clocks possess of ours?
8. What has a clock that is inferior—not the best?

BOYLAND.

CAN YOU LOCATE THESE NATIONS?

(Each word ends with "nation".)

1. The nation filled with dismay.
2. The nation that unites several things to effect some purpose.
3. The nation which destroys utterly.
4. The nation which is hateful or vile.
5. The submissive nation.
6. The nation to which people go and things are sent.
7. The nation created by the mind.
8. The nation which has an inexplicable influence.
9. The nation which always puts off till another time.
10. The floral nation.

SCATTERED SEEDS.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 2

- ENIGMA III.—Ye are the light of the world.
ENIGMA IV.—University of Oregon.
EUROPEAN CAPITAL CITIES.—Paris; air. Madrid; raid. Constantinople; plot, sin, ant, on. Copenhagen; page, hone. Christiania; air, tin, his. Stockholm; hot, lock. Vienna; nine. Petrograd; goat, err.
HIDDEN BOOKS.—1. Macbeth. 2. Talisman. 3. Adam Bede. 4. Les Misérables. 5. Sketch Book. 6. Romeo and Juliet. 7. Hamlet. 8. Rob Roy.

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REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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